



Historical Society of Decatur County

The Bulletin

Vol. 15 No.1

Spring 2010

Greensburg, Indiana

Epigraph-

*"History relies on
fact; readable his-
tory relies on fact
and conjecture."*

-Anonymous

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Editor's Comment

Add North Decatur High School's Chautauqua to your "must see" list this spring. If you have attended before, you know the high quality of the presentations; if this will be your first time, you will be extremely pleased with the activities and personalities you encounter. There won't be any referees or scoreboards involved, but there will be much to take pride in. John Pratt is an outstanding Ringmaster, and his students put on a great show.

Chautauqua: The Highs and Lows of a High School Event

When George Granholt asks you to write an article, you write an article – especially considering the fact that he taught me how to play tennis and helped me land a tennis collegiate scholarship. The subject – my favorite program , mirrored after one of the best movements in history that has been all but forgotten- Chautauqua.

I remember as I was researching the history of Decatur County for my senior research paper in college, I ran across an excerpt on the traveling chautauquas that passed through the area. First of all, I wondered why I had never heard of this. To think that Helen Keller, William Jennings Bryan, and John Phillips Sousa all were guests of local chautauquas simply amazed me. This was something that I needed to know more about. Great lectures, musicians, hypnotists, magicians, and ministers, just to name a few, all live under one roof (or tent as the case might be). What a tremendous showcase of diverse talents that combined local and nationally renowned acts. The traveling chautauquas brought the best of culture to small towns all across the country. Teddy Roosevelt referred to them as the most American thing in America. Unfortunately, the grandeur of Chautauqua faded away with the advent of radio and the Great Depression. Today, one must travel to Chautauqua, New York, to experience a Chautauqua. There are a few others across the country, and numerous arts and crafts fairs have adopted the name.

In the fall of 2007, I began teaching my first term as a high school social studies teacher at North Decatur. It is an incredible feeling to look forward to going to work every day, to know that at the age of 43 I have found my dream job. As much as I love the daily lessons and getting to know the students, I quickly realized that I needed to create projects that develop their cognitive skills and inspire within them a desire to learn. That was when I arrived at

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my first project idea, Chautauqua.

The idea for the students was simple. Take a talent, skill, or interest that they have, and combine that with the subject matter of the class to create one worthwhile project. Original music, documentaries, artwork, poetry, and personal testimonies are but a few of the examples I have seen. All students in my classes must complete a project, and with my teaching five different subjects (Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Indiana Studies, and World History), the diversity of topics covered is immense. Classroom winners are voted on by myself, and the students (each weighing 50% of the vote/just like Dancing With the Stars). The finals take place as a part of the grand Chautauqua extravaganza, where an independent judge determines the winners in a highly competitive, standing room only, finale.

After the success of the first student event, I realized it was time to think bigger: a full day and evening event filled with guest speakers and performers, as much as I possibly could make it resemble an event fitting the golden era of Chautauqua. In the spring of 2008, the first all day event occurred. Daytime guests included North Decatur alums Ruth Anne Gordon (Channel 8) and Judge Mark Bailey. Ray Boomhower gave a stirring rendition of Bobby Kennedy's 1968 Indiana Presidential campaign--Decatur County's last visit from a major presidential candidate. The evening featured the operatic talents of Alyson Bates and Cory Bickel.

As anyone who has ever hosted an event knows, the challenges have been many. Securing a full slate of lecturers and performers with no budget is challenge #1, especially as this is a semi-annual event. I have dozens upon dozens of rejection letters that I have accumulated. I know collecting rejection letters may seem a bit morbid, but I try and take each NO and turn it into a long term YES. For the current spring 2010 event, I already have two rejection letters to add to the collection. Condoleezza Rice is busy teaching at Stanford. Florence Henderson was willing to try and coincide a Chautauqua visit with her annual Indianapolis 500 stop, but this year's event (May 30th) does not occur until school has been out for a week.

Challenge #2, introducing arts and culture to rural Indiana: that is a challenge that the Arts and Culture Council of Decatur County knows all too well. That is why I am thrilled to have received a grant from them to help offset travel expenses. Our daytime lectures resonate extremely well with the students. They are able to personally interact with authors, and other experts from all fields of life. Having those same students pay \$5 in the evening for opera, jazz, or Rosemarie Von Trapp is another challenge. Tickets are one price for the entire day, \$10 for adults and \$5 for seniors/students. I once heard that the prospective \$5 ticket was just too pricey; still, I knew this would be a challenge before the event ever started, and I feel in-roads have been made.

The challenges of Chautauqua may be many, but the opportunities are endless. Through four events there have been nearly 30 outside lecturers/performers. The past two fall events have also included a student-driven Indiana Museum. Over 1,000 elementary students have participated, and it is growing by leaps and bounds (thanks largely to Jane Brown and the good folks at the Decatur County Historical Society). New possible adjunct events in the future include an Underground Railroad tour of homes, and a poetry festival. Chautauqua is an amazing way to educate our youth to the greatness of our local history. I describe Chautauqua to my students as "a celebration of diversity and the greatness within all of us." Thanks to the likes of Helen Keller and William Jennings Bryan, Chautauqua is alive and well in the halls of North Decatur – the students even pronounce it correctly now.

John Pratt,
North Decatur High School

President's Letter

I became a Historical Society Board member eight years ago. Looking back, I am amazed how much has changed for our Society. I remember in 2002 the Museum was showing its age. Vines were growing up the inside wall of the North Parlor. The upstairs bedrooms were mostly storage, and in the backyard we had an old garage which needed repair. Then came a bequest with a mandate to rebuild the museum into a "Museum For The Ages." I had the privilege of working with David Miers on the Building Committee. Now Decatur County has a world-class facility that is the envy of counties around us. We are all rightfully proud of our Society and Museum, and I am proud to say I had a small part in this rejuvenation.

I am going off the Board at the end of January, and I will return to what I was doing when I came onto the Board in 2002: finding old motion-picture footage of Greensburg and Decatur County. Presently, I have seven hours of color footage of Greensburg from 1937 to 1952 shot by Charles Platt, owner of Morris Five & Dime Store on the west side of the square. This film needs to be edited, and I will soon be receiving a large quantity of films taken of trains in and around Decatur County in the 1950's. These are films you are going to want to see. They will be available for viewing as soon as I finish them. This takes time, but the wait is always worth it. I look forward to sharing these films with you later this year.

Let me take this opportunity to thank everyone with whom I have worked these past eight years for all their work and continued support of our Society. Thank you to the Board for their hard work. To Diana Springmier, Charity Mitchell, and Susan Ricke for their tireless commitment to the daily requirements of running a museum. Also a special thanks to the many volunteers who work behind the scenes making it all happen. And thanks to you, the membership, for your enthusiastic support of our Society year after year.

Tom Barker, President

Historical Society of Decatur county

Membership Form

Circle type of membership at left.

Membership rates are as follows:

Student \$ 10.00 per year

Individual \$ 15.00 per year

Family \$ 25.00 per year

Patron \$ 50.00 per year

Historian \$100.00 per year

Lifetime \$500.00 (one-time payment)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Mail to: Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240 - Attn: Dues.

Check your address label to see if you have paid for this year. Memberships make great gifts. We are looking for new members.

. Historical Society of Decatur County

Museum Report – 2009

The Museum experienced an exceptional year in terms of both historical presentations and attendance. The varied featured displays and activities included the following groups and attendance numbers:

April – "Breakfast at Tiffanies" brunch – (37)

May – South Decatur Elementary Students—(19)

New Palestine Ladies—(12)

June—Sesquicentennial Events—(551)

Carousel Play and Learn Center—(14)

July—4th of July Open House—(112)

Wedding Reception Exhibit—(48)

August—Ricke Shower—(21)

September—Women Educators, D.C.—(22)

October—Tri-Kappa Auxiliary—(22)

Pressley Tours—two different days—(47) and (22)

December—Ladies Tour Group—(15)

South Decatur 4th Grade Students—(94)

"Barbie" Tea—2 seatings—(80)

Annual Christmas Open House—(250)

Greensburg 4th Grade Students

Totals: 1,486

Additional Guests: 581

Total: 2,067

Barbie at '50"

A simple thank-you just doesn't seem enough to say to everyone who helped with our "Happy 50th Birthday Barbie Celebration," which was the feature exhibit at the Museum during the month of December. We consider the exhibit was a huge success with many complimentary comments made by the nearly 800 people who toured the Museum.

Without the help of the many people who loaned their Barbies and accessories, and all their help in getting the exhibit ready for viewing, we couldn't have pulled it together.

There was a large Barbie exhibit at the Indianapolis Children's Museum, and probably the best compliment we had was made by several people who said, "I don't see how the Children's Museum exhibit could be any better than this one. This is fantastic, and it's free!"

To know that so many people enjoyed and appreciated the "Barbies" made all the hard work worthwhile.

Helen Hamilton

The Indiana Home

Logan Esarey

The Museum is in possession of a small book written by former Indiana University history professor, Dr. Logan Esarey, who died in 1942. *The Indiana Home*, actually a collection of essays intended to be read to his grandchildren, presents a simple, yet accurate, description of pioneer life during Indiana's territorial and early statehood years. The book does not observe political correctness (note description of Native Americans in the first chapter), and its sketches would probably not find their way into an Indiana history textbook today, but the present edition, published in 1976 and enhanced with several drawings of essential pioneer farm implements, kitchen utensils, home appliances, and carpentry tools, makes an excellent reference source for adults as well as children. At the end of the book, Professor Esarey offers a few interesting vignettes dealing with pioneer society. (Perhaps a "reality" series?)

Doctor William Harrison Kemper, U.S. Volunteers

The Museum has a brief biography of Doctor Kemper in its Civil War archives. His parents, Arthur S. Kemper and Patience (Bryant) Kemper were from Kentucky, and they were of German descent. In 1859, Doctor Kemper became a resident of Greensburg and entered the Greensburg Seminary in the building which still stands at the southwest corner of Franklin and McKee Streets where, the biography states, "...his studies were industriously pursued." He then studied medicine with John W. Moody, M.D., a prominent Greensburg physician who was one of the founders of the Indiana State Medical Society.

Doctor Kemper became the 47th Decatur County resident to enlist in the Union army, joining what would become Company B, Seventh Regiment Indiana Volunteers. His military unit was engaged in numerous Civil War battles, especially in the Tennessee campaigns. In April of 1863, Dr. Kemper became a member of Wilder's Brigade of Mounted Infantry.

After his war experiences, Dr. Kemper continued his medical studies, graduating from the Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn, New York. He then took up residency in Muncie, Indiana. Dr. William Harrison Kemper...another significant Decatur County veteran of the Civil War.

From a 1966 Historical Society *Bulletin*

Some Reminiscences on the Settlement of Decatur County, Indiana

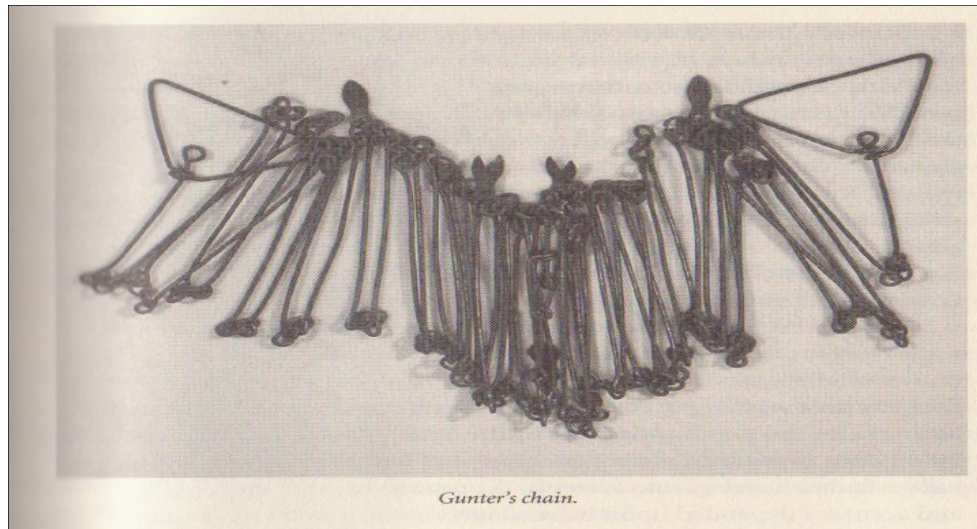
William W. Parker

Also archived in the Museum is an excellent article by Mr. Parker pertaining to Decatur County's early years which would make good companion reading with Professor Esarey's work. Mr. Parker's essay deals with these topics: The First Settlers, Surveying and Laying Out the New County, Entering the New Land, Organization of the New County, The Settlement of the Land, Clearing the Land—Work of the Men, and Work of the Women. Again, it is evident political correctness was not a concern of pioneer society. Both of these documents have a common theme of "land and family"—the foundation of humanity.

Edmund Gunter and His Surveying Chain

The science of measurement is a characteristic of every recognized civilization the world has known, and land surveying has always been one of the most important measurements. What, basically, constitutes civilization...well, how about people and place? We need to recognize not only who we are, but also where we are.

The Museum has available a book entitled, *Measuring America*, by Andro Linklater. Chapter one of this book devotes several pages to a discussion of a Welshman named Edmund Gunter and his invention of what became known as "Gunter's Chain." Perhaps you have seen old abstracts of land ownership using the term, "...so many chains and links" Well, now you have the opportunity to not only read about this device, but actually see one. Mr. Dallas Whipple has brought to the Museum one of Gunter's Chains, used by Dallas' grandfather in surveying Decatur County property. Thanks, Dallas, for bringing this fascinating artifact to the Museum.



Greensburg Second Graders

Two hundred second-grade students from Greensburg Elementary School visited the Museum on February 5th and 12th. The tour focused on life during Indiana's pioneer years and the early settlement of Greensburg in the late 1820's. Using the Museum's many items of this period of the Hoosier State's history, presenters Marilyn Beaver, Charity Mitchell, Lois Carol McCormack, Dallas Whipple, and Russell Wilhoit gave the students an informative explanation of early Hoosier life.

Initially, the house itself was discussed in respect to the various rooms and the items contained in them. Next, specific artifacts were examined, including hand-made tomahawks, a river-cane fishing pole and blow-gun, a large animal trap, a sizable gourd used for storage, and a gourd drinking cup. Of special interest was a set of surveying "chains and links."

Just to prove that students themselves can be teachers, one young boy gave this explanation when he was asked the purpose of the trundle bed: "Well, if the ropes break, the trundle bed will catch you." Now, you, too, know the real reason for a trundle bed.

All in all, the students were interested and very cooperative, and the Museum was put to very good use.

5th Sunday Musicals

The Board of Directors of the Historical Society of Decatur County extends its thanks to reed Schuster for his long-time dedication to those citizens of Decatur County who appreciate the importance of both history and good music. These two attributes of society, attested to by the Muses of ancient Greek society and much of classical music and literature, are interwoven in the tapestry of civilization. reed, we appreciate your effort and success in reminding us of this reality through the 5th Sunday Musicals. Thanks also to those who shared their musical talents with us.

Local Historical Tours

The Historical Society of Decatur County and the Adult Center are sponsoring local and architectural tours of nearby towns emphasizing the local museums. Marilyn Beaver will be organizing these tours.

The first tour will be on March 12th and will be a trip to Shelbyville to see the Courthouse, the remodeled Strand Theater, lunch, and then a trip to the Grover Museum. The Grover Museum includes street scenes from the early 20th century, a school room, a train exhibit, a special exhibit of Indian artifacts and a visit to the "olde soda shop" in the Museum where you can purchase a root beer float. The tour will leave the Adult Center at 10:00 and will return before 4:00. The costs will be: gasoline for the bus (ca. \$4-\$6.00 a person), and your lunch. The tour will stop at Applebees for lunch. People are not required to eat there and may see where they would like to eat around the Circle or downtown part of Shelbyville. The following restaurants are available: Linne's Bakery, Grandma's Wafflehouse, Three Sisters Bookstore, Bonnie & Clyde.

If you would like to come on the tour, please notify Marilyn Beaver (663-8680) before the 8th of March.

Articles still to come

Civil War advertisement

Coming Events

Tea cup exhibit

Request for Military Items for upcoming exhibit

St. Paul article ???

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY MUSEUM

Exhibits 2010

January-April, 2010

Gallery: The Civil War and Decatur County

The exhibit contains documents and photographs of the Underground Railroad in Decatur County, photographs of Decatur County buildings constructed before and during the War; artifacts from the war such as guns, a sword, bullets from Gettysburg; photographs, diaries, letters of Decatur County veterans of the Civil War.

Textile Display Room: Current Textile Donations to the Museum

These consist of an 1825 woven coverlet, clothing from the 1940's to the 1960's, doll clothing in a small trunk from the 1930's, women's hats from the 1940's through the 1960's, embroidery and needle work, wedding dresses, etc.

April-May

If Teacups Could Talk (an exhibit of tea cups and tea pots). There will also be an open house day in early May where tea and pastries will be served. **More information will be forthcoming.**

May-July

Military Exhibit (There will be military uniforms exhibited on mannequins in the House, documents, photographs, memorabilia in the Gallery and Textile Exhibition Room). **If you have any memorabilia of any war from the Revolutionary War to the Iraqi War and Afghanistan which you would be willing to loan us for the Exhibit, please call the Museum (663-2764) or Ginny Garvey (663-2132). We particularly need items concerning Women in the military.**

July-October

Housework before Electricity

Think of all the jobs in a household which needed to be done from the 1820's to the 1950's before there were many electronic tools. See how the washing machines changed from the creek to today's easy tools. Any memories of frozen washing on the line? The Museum will be displaying tools and household equipment that were used before we had electricity and indoor plumbing.

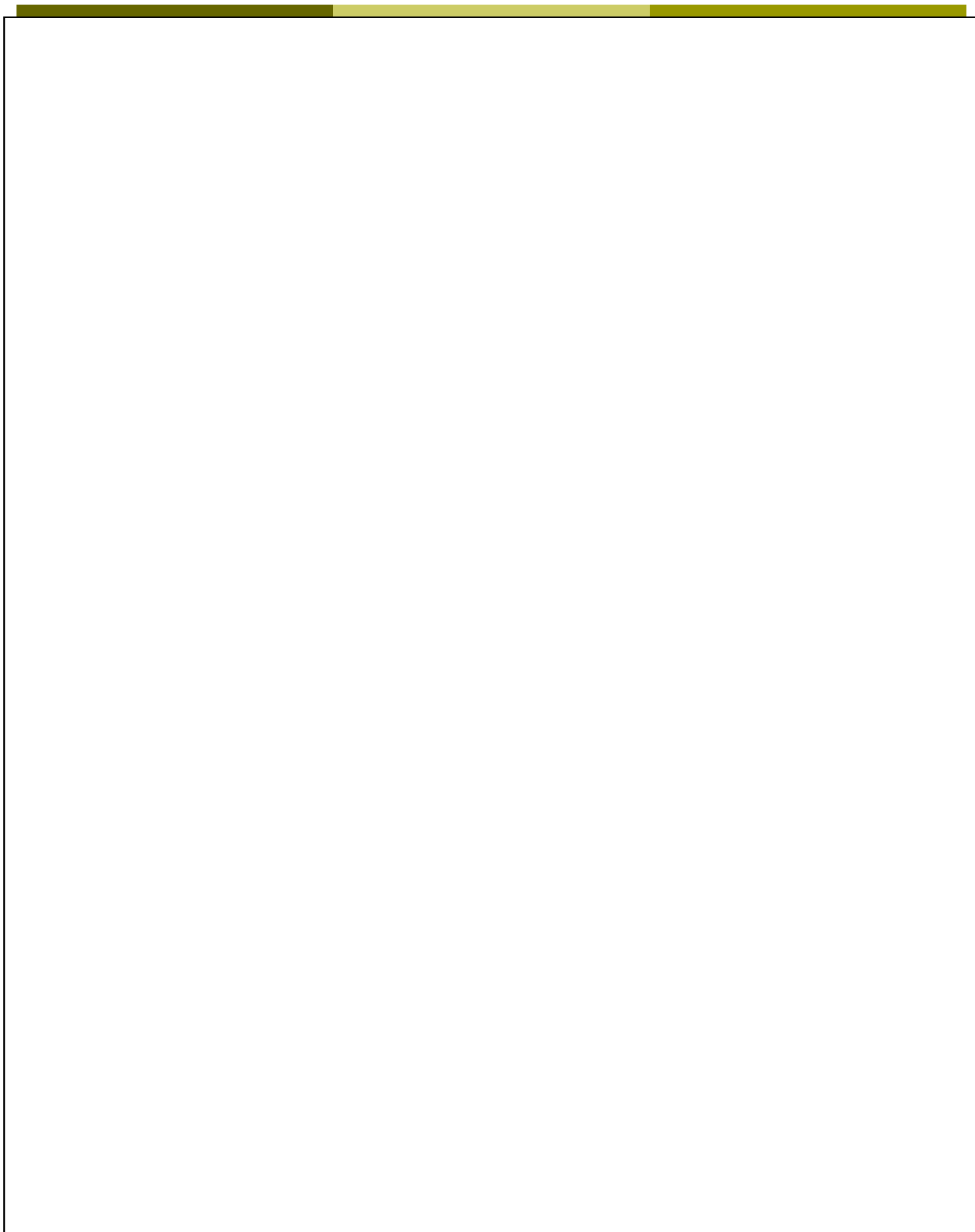
Textile Display Room:

Women's Clothing 1890-1920

November- December

House: Christmas Exhibit

Gallery: Train Exhibit



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“The Bulletin”

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Historical Society of Decatur County Museum

Museum Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 to 2:00
Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 and Sunday 1:00 to 4:00 - April
thru December
Museum phone/fax: 663-2764
Email: dechissoc@etczone.net
After hours call 663-2997 or 663-5141

**Society est. 1957
Museum est. 1984**



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Greensburg, Indiana

EPIGRAPH

"What do we mean by patriotism in the context of our times?...A patriotism that puts country ahead of self; a patriotism which is not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime. There are words that are easy to utter, but this is a mighty assignment."

Adlai Stevenson
August, 27, 1952

July Fourth

The museum will be open on the fourth of July following the Tri Kappa parade. The "Decatur County in the Military" exhibit will be featured. If you are entertaining guests for the holiday weekend, be sure to bring them by the museum. It's always free! This exhibit has something for the kids too!



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Will Cumback's "Unpublished Story of Lincoln" In *The Greensburg Standard*, February 2nd, 1900, With an Overview of Cumback's Career

By

Professor Calvin D. Davis

During the late Nineteenth Century and the early years of the Twentieth Century, Will Cumback was the most prominent man in Greensburg and Decatur County, and he was regarded by many people throughout the state as one of Indiana's greatest statesmen. Remembering his service as lieutenant governor, fellow citizens usually called him "Governor Cumback." Sometimes they called him "Major Cumback" or "Colonel Cumback," for he had been a major when he was a Civil War army paymaster, but he was brevetted a lieutenant colonel when he was discharged. Cumback had already won much prestige during the decade before the Civil War.

Born near Mt. Carmel in Franklin County on March 24, 1829, Cumback attended Miami University and the Cincinnati Law School for a few terms and, in 1853, settled in Greensburg and began the practice of law. His political career started at a Washington Township, Decatur County, Democratic convention which opposed the Kansas-Nebraska bill pending in Congress, for it would open Kansas and Nebraska to slavery if the citizens of these territories so desired. Like other opponents of the bill, Cumback was for a time described as a "Fusionist," but it was not long before he became a member of the new Republican Party. That fall Cumback was elected as the Fourth District's congressman and, as the youngest member of the Thirty-fourth Congress received attention as one of the congressmen who secured the election of the anti-slavery proponent, Nathaniel Banks of Massachusetts, as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Although James B. Foley of Greensburg defeated Cumback's bid for re-election in 1856, he remained an influential leader in the Indiana Republican Party. Soon thereafter, Cumback became a friend and an enthusiastic supporter of Abraham Lincoln, casting the first Indiana Electoral College vote for Lincoln in the 1860 election.

As a private in Company B of the Seventh Indiana Volunteer Regiment in 1861 during the "three-month" phase, Cumback was one of the Decatur County men who fought in the first land battle of the Civil War at a covered bridge in Philippi in northwestern Virginia. Actually this encounter was no more than a skirmish, but it was, nevertheless, important. The "battle" thwarted a Confederate attempt to take control of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and, furthermore, encouraged Unionists in that area to secede from Virginia and establish the new state of West Virginia.

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President Lincoln appointed Cumback as paymaster in the army, and he was stationed in Washington, D.C. for much of the war. Several times Cumback visited Lincoln at the White House, and the President had a high regard for him. In 1864 Lincoln considered Cumback for appointment as governor of the new territory of Montana. Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton offered Cumback a permanent position in the army as well, but he chose to return to Indiana. It was his proud boast that he could account for all of the \$60,000,000 he had disbursed as a paymaster.

Cumback resumed his political career after returning to Greensburg. In 1866 he was elected to the state senate, and in 1868 he was elected lieutenant-governor. Cumback seemed certain of the Republican nomination for United States senator in 1869, but he incurred the ill will of the incumbent governor and other powerful political figures, and his pursuit of a seat in the U.S. senate failed. Never again would he come so close to a major nomination, but he tried to secure such a nomination several times. In 1895 and 1896 Cumback's campaign for a gubernatorial nomination was promising, but that campaign, like so many, also failed. To the end of his life Cumback was, nevertheless an Indiana politician of whom Republicans in national and state politics took note. President Ulysses S. Grant offered Cumback an appointment as minister to Portugal. This offer was also declined, but in 1871 President Grant made available a position as a collector of internal revenue in Indiana, which Cumback accepted. He maintained the internal revenue office in Greensburg until 1883 when he retired from this position, again with pride in his record. Will Cumback could account for all of the \$35,000,000 he had collected.

Cumback and his wife, the former Martha Hurlbut, in 1881, built the great house on North Franklin Street, which is now the Porter-Oliger-Pearson funeral home. There the Cumbacks maintained an active social life, holding receptions and giving elaborate dinners. The death of Mrs. Cumback on February 9, 1899, was mourned by the entire community. In June 1901 Cumback again married. The new Mrs. Cumback was the former Miss Laura Wachstetter of Lapel, Indiana. Again, the beautiful home on North Franklin Street was the center of Greensburg society.

During the last quarter-century of his life, Cumback continued to perform many public services for his fellow citizens. He was president of the Citizen's Bank and president of the Carnegie Library committee. He was a leader in the Methodist Church and served as a delegate to a general conference of the church, at which he addressed that conference. Cumback was a member of the Decatur County I.O.O.F. and was elected Grand Master of this fraternal organization. He willingly accepted a less prestigious position when the Decatur County Fair needed stronger leadership. When Cumback died on July 31, 1905, the *New Era* described him as Greensburg's "most esteemed and valued friend." This comment was one of the most appropriate that newspaper ever made about anyone.

While Cumback addressed almost any kind of meeting in Decatur County and Greensburg, he also went on lecture tours elsewhere, and at various times was a Chautauqua speaker. Many of his speeches concerned problems of daily life, and he published several of his best lectures in 1895 in a volume entitled *Society and Life*. Sometimes Cumback talked and wrote about the Civil War. Interestingly, discussion of an Anglo-American alliance during the Spanish-American War alarmed him, and in the *Indianapolis Journal* he wrote an article recalling Britain's unfriendliness during the Civil War, which the *Greensburg Standard* republished on June 3rd, 1898. Cumback bitterly recalled how the British gave the United States only a week to turn over Confederate commissioners John Slidell and James M. Mason after Captain Charles Wilkes of the *U.S.S. San Jacinto* removed Mason and Slidell from the British mail steamer, the *Trent*, and made them prisoners. The British government had warned that if the United States did not comply with its demand, Great Britain would withdraw its minister from Washington—and that would have been a threat of war. Cumback praised Lincoln for complying with the British demand, for one war was quite enough. He also dwelt upon other offences: "Many an American soldier was killed by bullets furnished by dear old Anglo-Saxon England, and many of our ships were sent to the bottom of the sea by shells and torpedoes furnished by English factories."

In respect to the Civil War itself, however, Cumback preferred to recall less bitter memories. For the *Standard* on February 2nd, 1900, he wrote what he called an "Unpublished Story of Lincoln." A republication of this important contribution to Lincoln documents follows:

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Abraham Lincoln is the most interesting and picturesque character of this century. Everything relating in him—his words, his manner and his acts—are matters of continued and increasing interest, not only to his countrymen, but to the civilised world. Distance from the time in which he lived makes no abatement of the desire to know all that he said and did, whether in public or private life. So firm was his hold on the hearts of the people that their love and admiration was impressed on the generation that followed him, and it would seem that as we get farther and farther from the end of his career that his name will shine brighter and brighter, until the final consummation of all things.

As we look at his sympathetic and genial side we conclude that it was his great and loving heart that won him the coveted place among the immortals. But, when we carefully contemplate and consider the difficulties he had to contend with, and note the great wisdom and tact he displayed in meeting and overcoming the obstacles in his way, we are ready to conclude that it was his brain that won him his place among the greatest. The truth is that it was both combined. It were idle to attempt to show which was the greater.

It was my good fortune to be acquainted with Lincoln personally before he was a candidate for President. It was my privilege to take an active part in this nomination at Chicago. I had the honor to head the electoral ticket which was chosen, and my name was first called at the meeting of the electors. I cast the first Republican electoral vote that Indiana gave for Abraham Lincoln.

This I regard as the greatest honor that has ever come to me. Indiana had taken an active and important part in Lincoln's nomination. As I remember it, ours was the only State, outside of Illinois, that on the first ballot gave a solid vote for Lincoln. He and his friends had most grateful appreciation of what Indiana had done at the nominating convention and at the election.

Hon. Caleb B. Smith, of Indiana, had done most effective service in this and other States on the stump during the hot and exciting campaign. Indiana wanted him to have a place in Mr. Lincoln's Cabinet. Mr. Smith and his friends selected Hon. Cyrus M. Allen, a friend of Mr. Lincoln's, and an elector from the First Congressional District, and myself to go to Springfield and see Mr. Lincoln in the interest of Mr. Smith.

Mr. Lincoln gave us a most cordial reception. We had a free and informal talk with him, not only in regard to Mr. Smith, but also about the alarming condition of the country, in view of the prospect of a dissolution of the Union. The meeting was entirely informal. Anything formal would be the very acme of awkwardness to the presence and in conversation with Lincoln. He made us welcome, and there was no embarrassment. He knew we did not come to interview him for publication. He felt that we would ask no promises or pledges out of him. But when the visit was over we were confident that Smith would be appointed, and so told him when we returned. He was made secretary of the Interior Department.

While we were at Mr. Lincoln's house, a card was brought in to him on which was the name of the editor of the leading newspaper in the State of New Hampshire. I do not now recall the name. He was ushered into the parlor where we were. He was a very tall man, bony and slender. He had a most solemn countenance. He impressed me at once as a man who never had any fun, and did not care to have. He wore a very wide cravat, which came up to his ears and was wrapped round and round his neck. His coat was buttoned up to his chin. He looked more like a priest than an editor. He was evidently taking himself and his life very seriously. He commenced a very stiff and formal bowing when in the presence of his host, but that was not Lincoln's way. He went to him, seized his hand and shook in the real Hoosier style, and gave him the heartiest welcome. The editor never smiled or seemed to appreciate the heartiness of the greeting. The entire lace of formality, instead of thawing him, seemed to freeze him. He and Lincoln stood facing each other, and the former said to his visitor; "Why, my Yankee friend, you are as tall as I am. Let us put back to back and measure." Reluctantly, the editor complied and I was called on to umpire the match, which I did by putting a large book on their heads, which showed that Lincoln was the taller of the two. Mr. Allen and myself were introduced to the stranger. When we were all seated we gave the editor the entire attention of his host, and Allen and I dropped out of the conversation.

As I said before, it had become almost a certainty that most of the Southern States would secede and form a Confederacy of their own, and there was, of course, intense interest and anxiety to know what policy Mr. Lincoln intended to pursue—whether he would attempt, as Chief Executive, to coerce these rebellious States

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

with the army and navy or would attempt to heal up the trouble by some sort of concession or compromise. Mr. Lincoln had told us that he would form no policy, but would be governed by the circumstances existing at the time he took the oath of office.

It soon became evident as we listened to the conversation that the editor had come a thousand miles to get enough out of the President-elect to form a policy for him, and so proclaim, even if Lincoln had formed none for himself.

The editor was very sharp and shrewd, and exceedingly artful in attempting to cover his real motive in the interview. He had manifestly underrated the ability of Lincoln. He had carefully prepared his tactics, and as following his plan to get the mind of the President-elect on the absorbing question of the day. The fencing of Lincoln was beautiful and effective. The President-elect was intensely interested in all the editor said, and took his full share in the conversation. It was clear that he saw perfectly what the editor was after. But he gave no sign of impatience with him.

After an hour's struggle the editor abandoned the indirect method as hopeless. All his hypothetical cases had been failures. His suppositions had brought him nothing. He finally put the direct question: "Do you think, Mr. Lincoln, that the difficulty between the North and South can be settled by compromise?"

The question reminded Lincoln of a story. He said he knew a steam doctor in Sangamon county, Illinois, who confidently claimed his school of medicine was the only correct method of treating disease and that he could cure anything by steam. He said a farmer's team in that neighborhood ran off and threw the farmer out and wounded him in the bowels. The steam doctor was sent for and he claimed that he could mend the broken bowels by steaming the outside of the patient. Mr. Lincoln, smiling at the editor, said: "Do you think that good medical practice?"

The editor gave it up, rose, and, with a very stiff and formal bow, bade us all "good-day" and left. Mr. Lincoln said he felt sorry for the man who had come so far for nothing.--Will Cumback

Geography Question

Do you know where Hazelton, Indiana, is? Well, your editor must admit to his ignorance of the community's location until he found that Hazelton is the site of the Azalea Path Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. This information was obtained from the 2010 Indiana Travel Map published by visitIndiana.com, the "...official web site for tourism in Indiana." I also learned from this map that Greensburg is the location of the I.O.O.F. state home. However, the structures that comprised this facility no longer exist, and the enterprise now occupying the site is a for-profit nursing home open to the general public. The state I.O.O.F. has no connection with Greensburg.

Now your editor has no problem with azaleas, and he assumes that the exhibit in Hazelton is most impressive. Instead, your editor's complaint is with the map. There is a comprehensive listing of tourist amenities such as attractions, shopping, restaurants, lodging/camping, and recreation. Many Indiana communities, both large and small, are listed on the side-bars attendant to these categories. However, neither Greensburg nor any other Decatur County community is listed as having any event, attraction, or amenity which might entice tourists to stop and take a look at what we have. Many Decatur County citizens are involved in activities which showcase our communities, but the map only notes that we are half-way between Cincinnati and Indianapolis...and, of course that we have the I.O.O.F. home and an airport.

If you have the map, take a look at it. Don't we deserve a little more?

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY MUSEUM

Exhibits 2010

May 1st-July 31st

Military Exhibit (There are military uniforms exhibited on mannequins. There are documents, photographs, and memorabilia in the House, Gallery, and Textile Exhibition Room).

This Exhibit is a tribute to Mr. Bill Ford for his many years of conscientious and accurately detailed work on the records of the many men and women of Decatur County who served their country in time of war. Bill served in the South Pacific, stationed at New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, and New Zealand. Bill's navy uniforms are on display, along with books he compiled on various topics. Mr. Bill Ford: Decatur County thanks you!

August 1st-November 30th

Housework before Electricity

Think of all the jobs in a household which needed to be done from the 1820's to the 1950's before there were many electronic tools. See how doing the laundry changed from rubbing clothing against a flat rock in the creek to today's easy tools. Any memories of frozen washing on the clothesline? The Museum will be displaying tools and household equipment that were used before we had electricity and indoor plumbing.

Textile Display Room:

Women's Clothing 1890-1920

November- December

House: Christmas Exhibit

Gallery: Train Exhibit

Membership Form

Have you paid your dues for 2010

Membership rates are as follows:

Circle type of membership at left.

Student \$ 10.00 per year

Name_____

Individual \$ 15.00 per year

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Mail to: Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240 - Attn: Dues.

St. Paul

This article was first printed in Sept., 1913 in the Greensburg Standard a weekly newspaper and was edited and added to by: Russell Wilhoit, Decatur County Historian, Feb 5, 2010

notes *- Paul Hill cemt ** - Union Chapel Cemt * - Ridlen cemt*

This is the 14th in a series of articles about small communities in Decatur County

Next time we will journey over to Clinton twp and visit Springhill which was called New Zion for four years before they changed it to Springhill, that story next time, till then, please take care and will see you soon, Russell.

The County Line Town is visited in 1913

About twelve miles northwest of Greensburg is situated the town of St. Paul, partly in Decatur county and partly in Shelby. It has a population of over one thousand people, among them some of the best business men of the two counties. Two railroads pass through the town – the Big Four steam road and the I. & C. traction road – enabling the people to get in and out of the town at almost any hour and to receive and ship freight almost at will. Another runs up Flatrock to the fishing holes.

John Paul laid the town out in the year 1854, and for him it was named.

It is now a thriving business little city, having doubled its population within a few years, and abounds with magnificent homes well kept lawns and beautifully shaded streets, elegant church buildings, a splendid school building, natural gas, secret orders and an excellent local newspaper, as well as a number of splendid and imposing business buildings among them we mention the brick bank building, the three story building of the Knights of Pythias, containing a large and well arranged opera house on the second floor with elegant lodge rooms on the third, the L. A. Jewett one story brick, the three story brick building of the Odd Fellows, the J. M. Shortridge two story brick with its one story stone building adjoining, the George Kanouse two story brick, the Commercial hotel building and others worthy of mention.

The town is noted for its quarries of building and limestone, which are of a very superior quality, and especially noted for purity and solidity.

Gushing forth from the bosom of Old Mother Earth is a large, overflowing mineral spring of decided tonic and alternative qualities, with a flow of twelve inches, is a noticeable feature, and is located at the foot of the hill leading to the east. The News scribe visited and drank of the sparkling waters flowing from the wonderful spring.

Business and Professional Men

However great our desire to give each business man, lady and professional man individual and special mention, lack of space compels us to forego that desire, and we will have to content ourselves with merely the mention of names and business as follows:

W. W. Townsend, staple line hardware and farm implements.

L. D. Lindvill, proprietor Commercial Hotel.

The Benning Bros., groceries.

"Snaik store," George Hess, proprietor. (*1866-1931)

The Nading elevator, a large one.

Bowling's feed and grist mill.

W. R. Simpson, veterinary surgeon.

J. C. Simpson & Sons, lumber, building material, etc.

All of the above mentioned are in Shelby county, while all those mentioned below are in Decatur county.

Otto Linder, shoe repair shop.

Jacob Wise, tonsorial artist.

John McKee, staple and fancy groceries. (** 1847-1927)

Barber shop, William Favors & Sons. (* Military stone Civil War)

Postoffice, John L. Jackson, P.M.

Mrs. Daisy Ruckman, bakery.

(Continued from page 6)

Dr. G. J. Martz, M.D.
R. D. Templeton, general store.
Charles Kappes, jeweler.
Bowling & Thompson, managers St. Paul Hardware Co.
Albert Manlief, general blacksmith.
William Kelso, general merchandise. (*1869-1921)
Earl Leffler, shoe repair shop.
Charles Wiley, furniture store.
Ranck & Martin, general hardware store.
Ben F. Mason, confectionery, also tailor.
Millinery, Mrs. Ben F. Mason.
Carl Wolf, meat market.
H. A. Gladdish, drug store.
L. A. Jewett, general merchandise.
St. Paul Bank, by the Messrs. Hungerfords.
Jacob Johannes, St. Paul Buggy Works.(*** 1850-1934)
Dr. J. W. Bell, physician and surgeon.
Thompson & Cherry, livery barn.
Ice cream parlor, H. A. Gladdish.
Mrs. E. Roberts, restaurant.
Garrett & Conrad, repair shop, plumbing, hardware, harness, etc.
Mason Bush, restaurant and pool room.
Charles Neal, restaurant and confectionery.
Henry Hoger, dray and transfer.
Jewett Telephone Exchange, by Dr. Earl Jewett, Physician and surgeon.
Dr. Francis Howard, physician and surgeon. (*1840-1925)
Dr. J. J. Ballard, M.D. and druggist.
Albert Haymon, saw mill.

Secret Orders

I.O.O.F., strong lodge, owns their building.
K. of P., has one hundred five members, own fine business block and opera house.
Red Men, very strong, in numbers, own wigwam.
Woodmen, not strong but growing rapidly.

Churches

St. Paul has three churches. The Christian church is without a pastor at present. The membership has just fitted the church up with nice, new and comfortable chairs. Rev. E. T. Lewis is pastor of the M. E. church, and conducts services every Sunday. Strangers always welcome. Rev. Father Ketter is the priest of the Catholic Church, and services are held twice each month.

The Press

The St. Paul Telegram, a seven-column, is edited and published by Ora C. Pearce, and is a bright and sparkling local newspaper; a credit to the town in which it is published, and well worth a most liberal advertising, subscription and job printing patronage. Mr. Pearce has a well equipped plant, and the type for his paper is set by a junior lineo-type machine. May he receive the patronage he so richly merits?

New Store

Dr. D. J. Ballard has opened a new store on Webster Street, near the school building, and fitted with all kinds

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

of school supplies, drugs, druggists' sundries, etc. The Doctor is a physician and pharmacist of acknowledged ability has practiced medicine for thirty-seven years and will continue to do office practice. He invites his numerous friends to call and inspect his new stock and learn his exceedingly low prices on first-class goods.

St. Paul Buggy Works

Established in 1878 by Jacob Johannes, makes a specialty of storm buggies, and are now working hard to fill a large order for these buggies. Mr. Johannes captured first premium on his celebrated storm buggies at the Shelbyville fair, and is enjoying a splendid home and foreign trade. He makes a specialty of all kinds of buggy and carriage repair work, as well as repainting of automobiles and in furnishing first grade rubber tires. His long years of experience is a guarantee of perfect satisfaction.

St. Paul Bank

The last report of the condition of the St. Paul Bank showed demand deposits, \$74,788.27 and time certificate deposits \$15,737.07 – making a total of \$90,525.34. A splendid showing this, and they have never lost a single note since opening the bank in 1904.

It is a private bank owned by Messers. Walter, Dora and Orlando Hungerford, with Orlando Hungerford president, Walter Hungerford cashier, and Dora Hungerford assistant cashier. They pay three per cent, on time deposits, and are enjoying both the confidence of the people and a liberal banking patronage.

Public Schools

No schools in the state have a more hearty support of the patrons than does the St. Paul schools, and we venture the assertion that now where in Indiana have the school patrons greater cause for rejoicing over and sounding the praises of their schools than have those of St. Paul, for they rank A-one and are on a par with the very best in every branch and particular.

Superintendent Prof. J. R. Crawley is a regular "glutton" when it comes to work, and has spent his entire time of the past two summers in Chicago University at hard study. His aim is to bring the best possible work to the St. Paul schools, and he is succeeding admirably.

Following is a list of Instructors:

Prof. J. R. Crawley – Superintendent of St. Paul schools and teaches Latin, English, American History and Civics.

Prof. J. W. Fulton teaches Mathematics, Agriculture, Physics, Modern History and Manual Training.

Miss Ruby Riester teaches Music and Drawing and Domestic Science.

Prof. Frank Barlow is the instructor in grades seventh and eighth.

Miss Allie MacDonald has charge of grades fifth and sixth.

Miss Zella Thompson has charge of grades three and four.

Mrs. Grace M. Crawley is the instructor in grades one and two.

An excellent library on agriculture has been provided and Prof. Fulton was especially chosen to take charge of this work.

The Instructors are doing most excellent work in both the grades of High school, in fact they are the best corps of teachers St. Paul has ever had, and while this is saying a great deal, it is not saying one whit too much.

The physic laboratory is well equipped and is still growing.

One large room in the basement is being neatly fitted up for the work of domestic science, and during our visit to the school building the plumbers were at work putting in the gas fittings. There will be a large class of girls in domestic science. The work is being offered in both the freshman and sophomore classes for five double periods per week, each period forty minutes. The girls are very enthusiastic concerning the work.

The domestic science work is also given to the girls in the seventh and eighth grades, as well as agriculture.

In manual training one bench has already been installed, and one entire room in the basement is given over to this work, and it is being offered to all the boys in the High school, and many of them are so interested that they are paying for their own tools.

A large two acre tract, well drained, is given to the play grounds, and on the grounds are the fixtures for bas-

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(Continued from page 8)

ket ball work. The boys are already getting down to practice, and it will be remembered that St. Paul won every game of basket ball they played last year. A hall is also arranged for indoor basket ball in the basement.

The school building was erected in 1902; is of brick with stone foundation; has seven rooms and two in the basement, and cost from \$25,000 to \$30,000. It is both a splendid and magnificent building.

Greely Stone Company

Owned and operated by Albert Greely and his tow sons, R. E. and C. E. Greely; Albert is president, R. E. manager, and C. E. secretary and treasurer. The company is incorporated for fifteen thousand dollars.

They deal in nothing but crushed stone, and it is used for roads, streets, concrete works, ballasts, rip rap for railroads and fertilizer.

Their principal points of shipment are Cincinnati and Indianapolis, and they ship enormous supplies each month.

Scores of small cars called "dumpies" are loaded with slabs of stone one after another, with a monster steam shovel, and travel a circuitous route through the quarries and up an incline railroad forty feet high to the giant crushers, where they are relieved of their loads, by being dumped into the crushers, of which there are to, one a number seven and a half the other a number five. The stone is crushed and dumped right direct from the crusher into cars ready for shipment.

The power that propels these two mighty crushers is a one hundred and fifty horse power engine fed by two boilers of one hundred fifty horse power each. They have a capacity for crushing eight hundred to one thousand tons per day.

Have perfect and convenient switch connections with the Big Four, main line, railroad tracks.

The company has just placed a new three thousand dollar steam drill in its quarries, and it will drill thirty feet deep a four and a half inch hole through a bed of solid rock.

They employ forty men and the pay roll runs from eighteen hundred to two thousand dollars per month.

Mill Creek Quarries

For building purposes the Mill Creek quarries produce stratified limestone of a superior quality, and especially is the stone noted for purity and solidity.

Within the quarry grounds are a number of steam engines, boilers, drills, huge derricks, switch tracks and a half hundred men busy as bees.

The common day laborer is paid two dollars per day while the expert receives from six to eight dollars per day, working ten hours per day, and the pay roll aggregates three to four hundred dollars per week.

The quarries are owned by the Floyd heirs and are leased and operated by Patrick J. McAuliff, who has an investment of twenty thousand dollars in stone quarry equipment. He is doing a most successful and satisfactory business.

The Historical Society is always looking for estate pictures and memorabilia. Property abstracts are of particular significance due to the history contained in each document. Would you allow us to copy your abstract? We have a need for additional mannequins for some of our exhibits. Call the office at 663-2764 to donate items. What you consider trash could actually be treasure!

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“The Bulletin”

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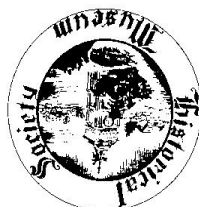
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Historical Society of Decatur County

The Bulletin

Vol. 15 No.3

Fall 2010

Greensburg, Indiana

**“O wild West Wind,, thou
breath of Autumn’s be-
ing...”**

**If Winter comes, can
Spring be far behind?”**

**Shelley: *Ode to the West
Wind***

Editor’s Note

The accompanying reminiscence, *My Home Town: Letts, Indiana, 1916-1938* was written by Neal McCammon who, along with brother, Leon, are sons of the late John McCammon. The portion of the document in the Museum’s possession, and presented here, is approximately one-third of what is titled, “Chapter 1.” Additional pages of “Chapter 1” will be published in ensuing issues of the *Bulletin*. As you read the excerpt, you will see the author has scripted a fond recollection of Letts, and the descriptions are singularly detailed. Accompanying the narrative is an index which refers to two “diagrams” of the community as well as several photographs. There are additional chapters in the author’s possession, and the Museum hopes to publish these in the *Bulletin* as they become available. The editor believes you will enjoy reading *My Home Town: Letts, Indiana, 1916-1938*.

I Remember

My Home Town Letts, Indiana 1916-1938

The town of Letts has a population of 250 to 300 people. Letts was a well kept and busy small town during this time. There was hardly a house or a property that was not painted clean and neat.

The New York Central Railroad ran through the town and connected Indianapolis and Louisville. It was the lifeline of the community and in my youth had two passenger trains a day; south in the morning at 9:00 A.M. and north in the afternoon at 4:00 P.M. The trains delivered freight and mail in each direction and picked up cans of milk from the creamery as they went north each afternoon. I was told that at one time there were two trains each way every week day. These were powered by steam locomotives. Diesel engines replaced the steam engines in the middle 1930s.

There were three grocery stores in town. Prior to these three stores there was an original lone grocery which was owned by Fraley and Welch. This store was located east of the railroad and on the north side of the main street. It was jointly owned by Mr. Fraley and Dr. John Welch and operated during the years of the 1890s and the early 1900s. This building was torn down, and the vacant lot was used to show movies on Saturday night. Later the movies were shown on the east wall of the Taggart store.

The next store (66)* opened about 1906 and was owned by brothers E.E. McCammon and John McCammon. The McCammon store was built by U.S. Parker, John McCammon’s father-in-law. Ulysses Sheridan Parker had seen a store in Tennessee that struck his fancy, and he came back to Letts and built a store like it. The building had a wide stairs in the back that led to a landing which then branched out in two directions. These steps led to a

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

balcony that went around the entire perimeter of the store bordered with a railing of spindles. Clothing, boots, and millinery were kept upstairs. The lower part was used for groceries, canned goods, cracker barrels, a pot belied stove, etc... There was much bartering done then. Customers would bring in chickens, eggs, and butter to trade for groceries. Paul Sturgis drove a truck to Letts from the C.J. Lloyd poultry house (now Maddux Auction) in Greensburg two times a week to pick up chickens and eggs. In the middle was the ever popular candy case where nickels and pennies were spent. The McCammon store was not far from the school, and the students could go to the store at noon- time. The candy case could furnish sweets for a penny a piece. John sold his interest in the store to his brother, Bert, about 1916 and in partnership with J.R. Crawley bought the Letts grain elevator.

Another grocery store (48) was owned by Harry Taggart and was on the east side of the railroad and on the north side of the main street. The store was on the ground floor of the K of P. building with the lodge rooms above the store. The lodge had a spacious room for meeting and had a room in the back of the meeting room for pool tables. The lodge rooms were out of bounds for non-members and all the teenagers in the community. The teens managed to sneak entrance now and then which was great and exciting fun. Movies were shown on the east side of the building with the white wall serving as the screen. The Taggart store was run by Harry Taggart and his wife Zelma. The store stocked groceries on the west side of the store and dry goods on the east side. They were not much into the barter business. Their stock was shipped in by rail from Indianapolis. All of their stock came from the wholesale grocery of Knothe, Wells and Bauer. When the business began to move out of the small towns in the late 1930's and early 1940s, Harry moved to Greensburg and was a clerk for Leslie Palmer at the Leader Shoe Store until he retired. The vacant building was then occupied by Pohlman Hardware run by Bill and Earl Pohlman, which was later moved to State Road 3. In later years and presently the building is the Letts Fire Department.

There was a room in the back of this store (48a) that was used as a creamery. Farmers would bring their dairy products and sell them here. The products would then be shipped to Indianapolis or to Greensburg by rail each day. The creamery was run by Emory Skinner.

The third grocery store (49) was owned and operated by George Buening in the building directly east of the railroad and on the south side of the street across from the Taggart store. This building formerly housed the Charles Knarr restaurant. The Buening grocery sold items from the store, but its main business was in operating the three huckster trucks which covered all of the southern Decatur county and northern part of Jennings County. These trucks were operated by Stanley Witkemper, George AmRein and Joe Tebbe. The huckster trucks would carry a nearly complete line of staples and meats. They would also accept barter of eggs and chickens. The trucks would start out early in the morning and be on the road until 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening. They would unload their eggs and chickens and immediately restock the trucks for the next day. This was a six day a week operation. It was a very successful business until the 1930's when automobiles were more prevalent and people became more mobile. George Buening closed the store and bought a farm in the St. Paul area. Joe Tebbe went to Greensburg and became a Farm Bureau insurance salesman. Stan Witkemper had a store in Milhousen. George AmRhein operated a farm between Letts and Westport.

There was a very thriving hardware store (55) on the west side of the railroad and on the south side of the street. Ken Adams was one of the owners. The store handled a full line of hardware, gates, fencing, barbed wire, etc... The broad front porch was covered and was a favorite hang-out for the loafers, especially on Saturday afternoons. Arthur Tudor worked there, and when the store closed in the 1930s, he and his wife Eva moved to Greensburg, and he spent the rest of his work life at Corbett-Craig Hardware.

There were two garages in town for auto repair and maintenance. The original garage (32) was built by Dr. Welch for his son Russell who was married to Mabel Evans. Russell, of course, was Dr. Dickson's brother-in-law. The mechanics were Jim Parker and "Sonny" Clark, Jim opened his own repair shop in his father's blacksmith's shop (see 21 a). Jim could repair anything from a toaster, an iron, a refrigerator to an automobile. After his wife died, Jim worked in maintenance at Bohn Aluminum and had his own repair shop on East Central in Greensburg. When the Welch garage was sold, "Sonny" Clark moved to Greensburg and worked at McCoy and

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Douglas for many years. The garage had two gas pumps and sold Standard Oil products. The gas pumps had a glass tube at the top which had one gallon markings and held 10 gallons. By moving a handle back and forth on the side of the pump, you were able to fill the tube. Gravity then fed the gas into the automobile gas tank. For a two gallon purchase, you would lower the gas to the 8 gallon mark. It was hard to be accurate. The Welch garage was sold in the late 1920s to Ed Buening of Millhausen. It was operated by him until the 1950s when he went out of business as the town began to fade and the auto traffic was mostly on State Road 3, west of town. Bill Rethlake was the other mechanic here, and after the closing he moved to Greensburg and had his own shop on West Main Street across from the Trakside Restaurant. Ed Buening and Bill Rethlake built the first Letts fire truck on an old truck chassis.

The other garage (35) was owned and operated by Ernest Carder. Ernest was the sole mechanic here, and a group of regular customers and evidently did Ernest well as he raised a large family.

The Letts State Bank (33) was in business from the 1890s to the 1920s. Stockholders in this bank were Dr. Welch, Urso McCorkle, and Ken Adams. The bank went out of business when automobiles allowed travel to the Greensburg banks.

After George Buening bought the building where Charles Knarr had his restaurant, Charlie bought the bank building and operated a restaurant there until the 1930s. Urso McCorkle was the owner of the natural gas company which had wells east of Letts. Kenneth Adams was the owner of the hardware store. There was a barber shop (34) in a room in the back of the bank. Frank Carder (son of Ernest) barbered here for several years as did Howard Williams.

The other barber shop (9) was on the north side of the street and west of the railroad. There were many barbers over the years. The barber whose tenure was the longest was Howard "Butch" Williams who worked in Letts for 20 to 25 years. He moved to Greensburg in the late 1930s and was a barber there until his death. One of his sons, Lowell "Little Butch" Williams worked at C.H. Johnson and sons for many years. His other son, Bob Williams, became well-known as a sports writer for the Indianapolis Star. When we played basketball in the alley beside his house, he wrote up the games on one of those toy typewriters. Bob was 11 or 12 years old then. The barber shop was sold to Harry White. When the town began to fade, Harry went to Greensburg and worked in a barber shop owned by Walter "Watt" Curtis on West Main Street at the corner of Main and Monfort.

The Post Office was between McCammon's store (66) and the Barber Shop (64). The first postmaster was John Stout (Marian Stout Lawson's father). Marian was an elected office holder at the courthouse in Greenburg and was at the Union Trust Insurance for many years. The next postmaster was George "Hunk" Davis. He was the grandfather of Dale Myers who was at the First Federal in Greenburg for many years. Dale was reared by his grandparents. Pearl Beard was the last postmaster.

There was a general purpose building (67) next to McCammon's store that was owned by Charlie Knarr. The rear of the building was used for storage. The front of the building was used for Saturday night chili suppers and oyster stew suppers for raising funds for churches which at that time did not have facilities as they do now.

The railroad depot (48) was on the east side of the tracks and north of the main street. Wilbur Wasson was the first agent, followed by Herschel Root, then Ray Patrick, and then Dorsey Trapp. There was the usual waiting room for passengers next to the telegraph office. The freight building (47) was north of the depot where all of the incoming freight was stored until it was picked up. There were four iron-wheeled cars that were the height of the freight car floor. The agent would usually have the outgoing freight and the cream cans on the cart ready when the passenger train stopped. In the meantime, the postmaster locked up the Post Office and came down to meet the train and exchange out-going mail for the incoming mail. Passengers boarded or departed at the same time. This event was always an interesting and "looked-for-ward to" event by everyone, especially the young people. When the train was not scheduled to stop, the railroad had a pick-up rack along the track south of the main street

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where the postmaster would hang the mail sack in a vertical position, fastened on both ends and with a strap in the middle. There was a hook on the baggage car that the baggage clerk would extend and catch the mail bag. He would kick the incoming mail bag out of the car and it would come flying onto the platform of the depot. Once in a while that pick-up would not work and there was a late delivery. South of the depot was a well that was used by most of the people and businesses as their only water supply. Most of the time there was a "community tin cup" hanging on the pump. When the cup was not there, you cupped your left hand under the spout and pumped the handle with your right hand and drank from the cupped hand.

Enoch Parker

Hard at work in his blacksmith's shop, Mr. Parker provided valuable services to residents of the Letts area for many years.



Membership Form

Have you paid your dues for 2010

Circle type of membership at left.

Membership rates are as follows:

Student	\$ 10.00 per year
Individual	\$ 15.00 per year
Family	\$ 25.00 per year
Patron	\$ 50.00 per year
Historian	\$100.00 per year
Lifetime	\$500.00 (one-time payment)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Mail to: Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240 - Attn: Dues.

Breakfast at Seitz' Restaurant

One of the popular eating places in Greensburg was this restaurant-a family-owned business serving local citizens for over sixty years. The restaurant is one of the enterprises described in the Historical Society's 20010-2011 calendar. The Museum has a breakfast menu from the restaurant, but a date for the menu is unknown. If you have an idea about the approximate date of the prices, please call the Museum.

Greensburg. Restaurants.

Good morning

The Seitz Restaurant

Breakfast Specials

No. 1—20c
Choice of Cold Cereal
Toast or Rolls
Coffee, Tea or Milk

No. 2—25c
Ham or Bacon
With One Egg and Toast
Coffee, Milk or Tea

No. 3—30c
Choice of Fruit Juice
and Choice of Cold Cereal
Toast or Rolls
Coffee, Tea or Milk

No. 4—35c
Choice of Cold Cereal
Ham or Bacon
with One Egg
Toast or Rolls
Coffee, Tea or Milk

No. 5—35c
Home-Made Hot Cakes
Country Sausage
Coffee, Tea or Milk

No. 6—45c
Choice of Fruit Juices
Home-Made Hot Cakes
Country Sausage
Coffee, Tea or Milk

FRUITS AND JUICES

Sliced Manana with Milk	10	Bartlett Pears	. . . 15
Sliced Banana with Cream	20	Sliced Peaches	. . . 15
Berries (in season)	. . . 10	Fresh Orange Juice	10
Grapefruit Juice	. . . 10	Pineapple Juice	. . . 10
Grapefruit (half)	. . . 10	Sliced Pineapple	. . . 15
Melons (in season)	. . . . .	Tomato Juice	. . . 10
Fruit Salad	. . . . .	Sliced aBnana,	
Grape Juice	. . . . .	Hal fand Half	. . . 15
Canned Grapefruit	. . . 15	Apricots	. . . . . 15

CEREALS FOR HEALTH

With Half and Half—15c
With Milk—10c :: With Cream—20c

Corn Flakes	Post Toasties	Shredded Wheat
Wheaties	Pep	Grape Nuts
Grape Nut Flakes	All Bran	Wheat Krispies
Rice Krispies		Puffed Wheat
Hot Oat Meal		Hot Cream of Wheat

BAKED FOR BREAKFAST

Cinnamon Rolls	. . . . . 05	Toast and Jelly	. . . 10
Cinnamon Toast	. . . . . 10	Milk Toast	. . . . . 15
Fresh Doughnuts (2)	. . . . . 05	Toast	. . . . . 05
French Toast	. . . . . 15	Cookies	. . . . . 05
Home-Made Griddle Cakes with Syrup	. . . 15		

EGGS AND MEAT

Omelet with choice of Jelly, Tomato, Cheese or Ham	20
Country Fresh Eggs, with Bacon, Ham or Sausages	30
Country Fresh Eggs (any style)	. . . . . 35
Plain Omelet	. . . . . 10
Bacon (3 strips)	. . . . . 20
Sausages	. . . . . 20
Ham	. . . . . 30
Poached Eggs	. . . . . 20
Fried Pork Tenderloin	. . . . . 25
(Bread and Butter or Toast served with above orders)	

BEVERAGES

Hoa Chocolate	. . . . . 05	Hot Tea	. . . . . 05
Breakfast Cocoa	. . . . . 10	Hot Tea (pot)	. . . . . 10
Buttermilk	. . . . . 05	Ice Cold Milk	. . . . . 05
Fresh Hot Coffee	. . . . . 05	Postum	. . . . . 05

The Military Exhibit

The military exhibit at the Historical Society Museum during the summer of 2010 was not only interesting but highly significant because it presented opportunities for both young and old to be taught, or to remember, the sacrifices many have made to preserve the American heritage.

It took many hours of staff and volunteer work to assemble the memorabilia willingly provided by so many individuals. The Open House held in connection with the exhibit was especially well-attended, and the following Decatur County veterans were in attendance. Pictured are:

Dave Stults	U.S. Navy	1958-1985
Dallas Whipple	Ind. National Guard	1963-1965
Charles Shirk	U.S. Army Air Corps	World War II
Kim Girts	U.S. Navy	Submarine Service
Stan Lemmons	U.S. Navy	Korean War
John Tumilty	U.S. Navy	Submarine Service
Jerry Westhafer	U.S. Air Force	1954-1958

Not pictured but in attendance were **Bill Boone** and **Henry Bicknell**, veterans of World War II.



How I Spent My Summer Vacation

By John Pratt

We all need a hero, especially when we are young. My hero was always Abraham Lincoln. His biography was the first book that I checked out at the library (thank you Martha Samuels). I used to have my hair cut so that it looked like I had sideburns (thanks Mr. Strasberger and Mr. Eubank). Growing up with three brothers and a sister, there was never much extra money for fancy vacations. In fact, we went on three. One to Hodgenville, Kentucky to see Lincoln's birthplace, then back to Kentucky to see the outdoor drama, "Lincoln," then the third to Southern Indiana to visit the Lincoln Boyhood Memorial. Now flash forward thirty-four years. I received the opportunity to spend an entire week in Springfield, Illinois, all expenses paid. So let me tell you what I did on my summer vacation.

This past spring I was honored to have been selected as a Horace Mann, Abraham Lincoln Fellow. Fifty teachers, one from each state, are chosen to spend an all expense paid week at the Abraham Lincoln Museum and Library in Springfield. The \$167 million dollar facility is the host for the educators that is underwritten by the Horace Mann Insurance Company. The facility opened in 2003. The teachers are separated into two groups, one attending in June and the other in July. I attended the June session. After a leisurely four hour drive across I-74 I found myself in the Illinois capital ready to immerse myself in the life our nation's most beloved President.

Activities of the week were separated into three categories: touring Lincoln sites, listening to historical lectures, and getting a "behind the scenes" look at the Lincoln Museum and Library. Touring the Lincoln sites in Springfield should be on everyone's to-do list. Our first stop was in New Salem, about a fifteen minute drive away. New Salem was Abe's first home in Illinois. It was here along the Sangamon River that he went to work as a store clerk, postmaster, and surveyor, and where he fell in love for the first time and where he first ran for political office. Although few artifacts and documents remain from those days, it is still worth the trip. It is now a wonderful living history community where you can see Lincoln's surveying equipment in the museum.

Lincoln's tomb is located just on the outside of Springfield in beautiful Oak Ridge Cemetery. On Tuesday evenings at 7:00 in the summertime there is a flag lowering procession put on by the 114th Infantry Illinois Volunteers-loved it! From there it was on to downtown Springfield, where the bulk of the sites are located. Just one block south of the museum is the Old State Capitol where Lincoln gave his "House Divided" speech and where Barack Obama announced his presidential candidacy. Just a few yards away is the Lincoln-Herndon Law Office where Willie and Tad would run amok. Keep walking southwest about six blocks, and you arrive at the Lincoln home. The beautiful (and modest) home is filled with original artifacts and is a must for any visitor.

The second part of the Lincoln fellowship experience encompasses historical lectures. One of the reasons I love the Chautauqua concept is that I find a good lecture to be highly motivating and enjoyable. The good folks at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum did not disappoint. Research historian Bryon Anderson spoke on "Lincoln's Illinois" and "Lincoln's Cabinet." The Illinois State Historian lectured on "Lincoln, Slavery, and Emancipation" and he was followed by Dr. Richard Hughes on the "Value of History." Rounding off the historical lectures were Mark Depue speaking on "The Art of Oral History" and Mark Johnson, speaking on "Newspapers of New Salem."

The third part of the week exceeded my expectations; we learned what goes on at a Presidential library and museum. This included fascinating topics such as how to handle original documents and how to authenticate them. Of course, Lincoln Documents were in abundance, but I was also able to work with such original letters as correspondence from General Grant to one of his commanders and Robert E. Lee's request for a pardon to President Andrew Johnson. On my own I was able to track down a request from leading Indiana state senators asking President Lincoln to appoint our own Will Cumbach as ambassador to Berlin (Will would go on to serve the President as Union Paymaster). Repairing damaged documents is another art that was demonstrated. Wouldn't it be great if we had the facilities to accomplish this here!

The museum itself is very well done, combining historical artifacts and information in entertaining and

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captivating formats that attract audiences. The plaza is where the adventure begins, where you are greeted by the President and his family (made of rubber – great photo op). Journey One is the wing dedicated to the pre-presidential years, which includes a wonderful depiction of a slave auction and an interactive 1860 campaign room using a video tape made by the late Tim Russert. The Treasures Gallery was my favorite part of the museum as it highlighted the original artifacts (his hat that he wore while in office is featured which has his fingerprints on it from tipping his hat). The museum also has a signed copy of the Gettysburg Address.

The Presidential Years Gallery features murals of Ft. Sumter and Gettysburg, plus a four-minute audiovisual presentation entitled, "The Civil War in Four Minutes" which showed the devastation caused by the Civil War. For the ladies in the group, ball gowns are featured by the prominent women of the day. The museum also features a daily live performance of "Ghosts in the Library," and the movie, "Lincoln's Eyes" which includes special effects such as the roar of cannons. The cost for the museum is \$12 adults, \$9 seniors, children 5 – 15 \$6, and under 5 is free. I might add that I would highly encourage everyone to visit the library as well (open Monday – Friday, 9:00 – 5:00). There is a wonderful room just for browsing, plus the archive's room is very user-friendly and will give you the opportunity to work with original documents. A great place to start is to go to the museum website, click on "library," then search World Cat under Lincoln Collection and type in your topics of interest. I am sure you will find a piece of history that will be waiting for you.

I love teaching. Such a unique opportunity to learn so much about my hero and to interact with educators from across this great country would not have happened otherwise. Would I recommend the four- hour drive to Springfield to experience the life of the one who saved the union? Absolutely, yes! In fact, I would place it in my top 10 of favorite historical sites that I have visited. I always love mentally creating top 10's from life experiences, from concerts watched and states visited to books read or wildlife seen. Thus, as I close this article by sharing my top 10 list, know that a trip to Springfield is well-worth your time (Doris Kearns Goodwin will be there greeting members on October 14 as they open a new exhibit, "Team of Rivals"). Also never forget where Lincoln's formative years took place.

John Pratt's TOP 10 Historical Sites Visited:1-USS Arizona Memorial 2-The Alamo 3-The Coliseum 4-Arlington Cemetery 5-Stone Mountain Civil War Battlefield (where my great grandfather and CMOH recipient Reuben Smalley bravely fought with the 83rd Indiana Volunteer Regiment) 6-Notre Dame Cathedral 7-Grassy Knoll 8-Mt. Rushmore 9-Oregon Trail Ruts and Interpretive Center, and 10-Lincoln Springfield Experience.



An original drawing of Lincoln's tomb in Springfield looks nothing like the modern day monument which is a part of the experience in Springfield, Illinois today.

Historical Society of Decatur County Museum

Current and Coming Events

The Victorian House with its collection of furniture and artifacts
from the 19th to the early 20th century.

Military Exhibit

Come and see the uniforms, weapons, photographs, posters, documents concerning Decatur County people in military action from the Civil War to Afghanistan. Exhibit open through the middle of October.

September 18th (Saturday) Fall Festival

Artisan's Day at the Museum 1-4 p.m.
Tours of the fronts and history of houses in downtown Greensburg
Meet at the Museum on the hour from 1 to 4 p.m. Tour takes about an hour

October

Saturday, October 9th Volunteer's Luncheon

Saturday, October 23rd Halloween at the Museum
Fun things to do for kids and adults. Save the date. More information to come.

November

Gallery
Cases — Decatur County Attic
Miscellaneous displays of toys, tools, needlework, documents, and books in the
Museum Collections

Walls: Framed Documents and Paintings from the Museum Collections.

December

Christmas Decorations — The Sweet Memories of Christmas

Christmas Open House (Sunday, Dec. 12, 1-4:00)

Editor of the Bulletin

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“The Bulletin”

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Historical Society of Decatur County Museum

Museum Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 to 2:00
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Historical Society of Decatur County

The Bulletin

Vol. 15 No.4

Winter 2010

Greensburg, Indiana

**"If all the year
were playing
holidays/ To
sport would be
as tedious as
work" -**



Carl G. Fisher in 1909

Inside this issue:

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Carl G. Fisher

By Joe Westhafer

L. Spencer Riggs wrote an extensive article titled: "Carl G. Fisher-Indiana's Best Kept Secret." The title is appropriate. Carl Fisher was one of the most famous and wealthiest men in the early 20th Century. His estimated wealth in 1925 was fifty million dollars. He personally knew and socialized with many of the most famous names of that time: Teddy Roosevelt, Warren G. Harding, Henry and Edsel Ford, Will Rogers, Gene Tunney, James Whitcomb Riley...the list is practically endless.

In his book titled "The Pacesetter," Jerry Fisher (a cousin) included this quote from Howard Kleinberg, special contributor for *The Miami Herald* in his preface: "Carl Fisher did not live the American dream-he made the American dream. The dirt-poor Indiana boy built his dreams into vast fortunes, and nothing was impossible to Carl G. Fisher. He had the vision to see, the daring plan, and the courage to build."

Overlooked and forgotten by the editors of "Who's Who," Carl Fisher was a practical visionary who created the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental road, built the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, developed Miami Beach, created the Dixie Highway, and built Montauk, N.Y.- known as the Miami Beach of the North. He was called the P.T. Barnum of real estate. Will Rogers called him the "mid-wife of Florida," and Carl and Jane, his wife, were called the "King and Queen" of Miami Beach.

Carl Graham Fisher was born in Greensburg, Indiana, on January 12, 1884, to Ida and Albert Fisher in a house near the intersection of Broadway and North Streets. He did not do well in school because of poor vision and dropped out at twelve years of age. His severe astigmatism was not corrected until he was in his early thirties.

Ida divorced Albert, whose intemperate life style had taken his family to near poverty, and she moved her family to Indianapolis. Carl who was at twelve years of age the oldest of three sons, determined to do all he could to support his family. He started by selling peanuts, candy, books and magazines on the railroad. He later said he developed his salesmanship skills during this time. He worked in a bookstore where he could satisfy his desire to read. Working in a bank introduced him to finances, but it was the high-wheel bicycle that really started him on his successful career in business.

Carl and his two brothers, Earl and Robert, "Rolla," were excellent mechanics, and the bicycle shop on Pennsylvania Street was successful. Soon realizing there was no contest between the bicycle and the automobile, he converted his shop into an auto dealership - probably the first in the country. He looked for a place to expand and chose two blocks on North Capitol Boulevard where he sold a variety of automobiles. His hard work and marketing skills again resulted in success.

In 1904 Fisher and Jim Allison bought a patent for \$2,000 and de-

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veloped a compressed acetylene gas cylinder for the first successful automobile headlight and formed the "Prest-O-Lite" Company. Nine years later they sold their company for nine million dollars to Union Carbide, which wanted the cylinder for welding and medical gases.

Years of selling and racing cars had taught Fisher that the quality of American cars was poor and racing extremely dangerous. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway was the result of his putting his enthusiasm, money, and talent into developing the track for testing and racing. Early reviews were not good due to the track surface, but once it was paved its success was beyond his expectations.

Fisher's international travels had convinced him that this country's roads were few and inferior. He began to dream of a hard surface road across America. The drive for a "Coast to Coast Rock Highway" was presented to leading businessmen of the Mid-West in September 1912. In thirty days one million dollars of the expected ten million required was pledged. While the full amount was never realized, construction proceeded, and with the financial and organizational talents of Henry B. Joy, President of the Packard Motor Car Company and others, the road was completed.

It was typical of Fisher to step aside after originating the idea. As Jerry Fisher wrote in his preface: "... the American nation has never identified or recognized the man who had so radically changed it. Perhaps that was Fisher's own fault for not promoting himself. Nothing prevented him from founding the Fisher Speedway or Fisher Beach or Fisher Highway, but that was not his style even when others wanted him to do so. For Fisher, the project was always more important than his particular role in it. Worldly honor was without meaning to Carl. Working, building, and dreaming were his only values."

Miami Beach became Carl's active retirement haven. Only someone with Carl's vision could have seen a magnificent development out of a Florida swamp. The challenge was captivating to him.

Roads to Florida and within the state had been deteriorating ever since the Civil War. Carl, realizing that his success in developing Miami Beach required good roads, conceived the idea of the Dixie Highway from Canada to Miami. With states along the route vying to be included, as they did for the Lincoln Highway, work was soon underway. The 1916-1917 winter season was financially the best ever for Carl because W.W. I brought tourists who would have otherwise gone to Europe. The boom continued, and in 1925 Carl's fortune was immense.

This same year Fisher looked to the North. He bought ten thousand acres of land at Montauk, N.Y., at the East end of Long Island and planned a development to entice Miami Beach residents, and others, to summer there.

His Montauk Beach Development Co. built stables, polo grounds, beach-front board walks, theatres, a church, the Montauk Yacht Club, the Montauk Club, the Montauk Manor - a hotel second to none - entire city blocks of expensive dwellings, and a six-story office building topped with his personal penthouse. An exorbitant amount of money was spent, but sales were slow.

On September 17, 1926, a severe hurricane destroyed most of Miami Beach. Fisher put Montauk on hold in order to rescue his dream city of Miami Beach, and the New York project slipped into financial oblivion. With the Wall Street crash of 1929, what was left of his financial empire was gone.

On Friday, July 14, 1939, Fisher passed away in Miami Beach. After an impressive funeral attended by many dignitaries, his body was sent to Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis for internment in his mausoleum, ironically the only property he still owned in the city.

Spencer Riggs closes his article by saying: "Carl G. Fisher was not only the Midwest's best kept secret, but perhaps America's as well." Greensburg certainly needs to remember this native son!

Joe Westhafer, August 2010

Editor's Note

The accompanying reminiscence, My Home Town: Letts, Indiana, 1916-1938 was written by Neal McCammon who, along with brother, Leon, are sons of the late John McCammon. The portion of the document in the Museum's possession, and presented here, is the second part of chapter one; the first part of chapter one was published in the fall 2010 issue of The Bulletin. As you read the excerpt, you will see the author has scripted a fond recollection of Letts, and the descriptions are singularly detailed. Accompanying the narrative is an index which refers to two "diagrams" of the community as well as several photographs. There are additional chapters in the author's possession, and the Society hopes to publish these in The Bulletin as they become available. The editor believes you will enjoy reading My Home Town: Letts, Indiana, 1916-1938.

I Remember Part II MY HOME TOWN LETTS, INDIANA 1916-1938

The buildings (41-45) were owned by the Reimann-McCammon Co. Elevator. These buildings housed the various operations of the company. The elevator was purchased by John McCammon and J.R. Crawley about 1912. In the late 1920s Wallace Reimann of Shelbyville bought Mr. Crawley's share of the business and was basically a silent partner. In a short time the company had purchased the Burney, Sandusky, and Williamstown elevators. Mr. Reimann was a son-in-law of Mr. Nading who owned the Greensburg, Adams, St. Paul and Lewis Creek elevators.

The big part of this building was where the grain bins were used for storage. The top was where the grain was elevated to by belted buckets and directed into the separate bins. I used to like to go up into the top and look over the whole town.

The Burney elevator would hold about 10,000 bushels of grain. It was managed by Charles Ward and some of the employees were Elmer Wiley, Marshall Parker, Arthur Pavy, and Dennis Scott. The Sandusky elevator would hold about 15,000 bushels. The Williamstown elevator would hold 10,000 bushels and was used only during harvest season. Both elevators were managed by Shirley Davis, and some of his employees were Howard Osting, Bob Waybright, and George Chadwell. John McCammon managed the Letts elevator in addition to the overall operation of Letts, Burney, Sandusky, and Williamstown. Some of the employees at Letts were Fred Hessler, U.S. Parker, Milo, Harold, Neal, and Leon McCammon. The last four were all John McCammon's sons and worked their high school and college summers at all of the elevators.

The "Sash Building" was owned and operated by the elevator. During the years of the 1920s and 1930s there was a need for someone to build and repair windows. A supply of glass and wood was kept here, and one or two people were needed to make and repair windows. U.S. Parker worked here and was capable of making and fixing almost any wood product. He was a skilled carpenter and built many of the houses in Letts. He also built the Methodist Church in Letts.

The "Log Yard" (44). There was a space between the "Sash Building" and the stock yards that was used by loggers in the area. The railroad furnished flat cars for log shipping. There was no mechanical equipment then, so the loading was done by ropes and pulleys pulled by horses. There were skids from the ground to the flat car and pulleys were put on the opposite side of the car with ropes passing through the pulleys with one end of the rope around the log. The horses at the other end would pull the logs onto the car. Horses were used to drag the logs and position them in front of the skids. It took some human skill to load the logs, and it was surely dangerous. There was no record of any severe injuries in this operation, and many logs were shipped from here. Logs were brought to the yard by specially-built wagons.

The "Stock Pens" (43). The railroad provided the stock pens for the use of the stock raisers. There were six separate pens with the necessary "chutes" leading into the cars. There were two chutes: one for the bottom level of the stock car and one for the upper level, although not all rail cars had two decks. Earlier-built cars had only one deck. There were no trucks or wagons to haul stock so cows, hogs, or sheep were herded down the roads to the stock yards, sometimes a distance of three or four miles. Of course, at that time, all farms were

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fenced, and it was not difficult to keep the animals together. It was different when the drive got into town and the animals had to be kept off lawns and out of gardens. Some farmers who had a longer distance to go would pool their drive and have additional help. There were times the animals would be left in the pens overnight. There was never an incident when animals were stolen or let out of the pens as a prank. Those were the days people trusted each other and respected their property. The elevator had a platform stock scale and the animals were weighed for a small fee. A farmer could tell, after his stock was weighed at the shipping point, how much weight shrinkage there was between the shipping point and the purchase point.

The seed cleaning and stock scale (42) belonged to the elevator. The west part of the building was used for storage of cement and fertilizer. The east part of the building was the most important as a real service was performed here. During the nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties there was a semi-primitive way of harvesting clover and timothy seed for re-seeding. The clover or timothy was threshed like wheat, but the seed was mixed with weed seed, chaff, and small pieces of stalks of the hay. In the upstairs of this building was a machine that could separate everything out of the mixture, and you would then have beautiful pure seed. The machine had three separate horizontal shelves that were on a thirty degree incline. Screens with different sized holes could be inserted into the side of each shelf. The shelves were on top of each other with about three inches between them. The hopper containing the raw seed mixture was elevated from the main floor by a belt with buckets attached. The mixture would then be poured onto the top screen. All of the screens would be vibrating lengthwise and shake the mixture so that the chaff would run off and the seeds dropped through the holes. The seeds would drop onto the next screen and next larger pieces would be run off. The remainder, which was clover or timothy would run off, and the small weed seed would fall through and good seed would run off the end of the screen. All of the ends of these screens were connected to two chutes that would drop the contents into a bag at the end of the chute onto the lower floor. The trick in the ideal separation of the seed was the proper use of the different screens with the different sized holes. This was a very busy operation in late summer and into early fall as many bushels of seed went through this operation. The machine could also clean soy beans and wheat for seeding.

The elevator office (41) was north of the seed cleaning building. To the east was a building used for the storage of animal feed. This building would have several tons of feed stored for sale. The two brands of feed handled were Tuxedo and Wayne which in the nineteen twenties and nineteen thirties were very familiar names. After a period of time the feed was bagged in one- hundred pound sacks that were made of print material especially designed for the purpose of laundering and then made into clothing, sheets, dish cloths, etc. Each ton of feed might have a half dozen different designs and colors in the material. This proved to be a good selling point.

Situated between the elevator office and the seed storage building was a very important scale used to weigh all vehicles passing over carrying grain or coal. During this time almost everyone burned coal for heat so the elevator kept over one hundred tons of coal in the bins all of the time. Much of the coal was sold from the rail car to the buyer's home. Most of the people would buy a winter's supply during the summer as the coal was fifty cents a ton cheaper then. Each train car held at least forty tons, and there was no place hotter than a coal car when the temperature was ninety to a hundred degrees.

The heart of the elevator business was the building that housed the machinery and bins needed to handle and store grain. There was a large engine whose flywheels were nearly the height of a man. This engine would turn the main shaft connecting a series of wheels carrying operating belts used to run the drag belt in the grain pit, the corn sheller, the grain grinder, the elevator belt that carried the grain to the top of the building (which was three stories high), and the lifts that were used on the front wheels of the wagons or trucks to elevate the vehicle in order to dump grain into the hopper in the floor and move it horizontally to the buckets already attached to a belt. These buckets would then transport the grain to the very top of the building. By changing the spouts at the top, the grain could be channeled into any one of the four bins. These bins could hold 15,000 bushels of grain. When the grain was sold, it was moved to the second floor into a bin that could weigh up to one hundred bushels. When the grain was released, it would fall through a metal spout into the railroad car by the side of the building. When the wheat harvest was in full blast the horse-drawn grain wagons could be lined up for one to two blocks. The wagons would be pulled into the building with the rear of the wagon directly over the pit in the floor, the horses were unhitched and moved away from the wagon, and metal hooks were attached to the front wheels of the wagon. Then a lever was raised to tighten the belt, and the front end raised to dump the grain.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Wagons were used prior to the late nineteen twenties until trucks became available which could move larger amounts of grain faster. Trucks were handled much the same way as wagons. Some of the earlier grain and cattle trucks were owned and operated by Harvey Owens, Howard Williams, Roy Freidersdorf, Bill Krummel and Lowell Hubbard. The trucks at that time had beds that could be converted for hauling stock or grain. Now most

livestock was being moved by truck to Indianapolis or Cincinnati markets, so the local stockyard business decreased. Ear corn was handled in the same way as wheat but taken into the corn sheller in the basement. The sheller was made of two round metal plates enclosed in a frame. The plates had metal prongs built into them and the space in between could be adjusted so the distance would be a little wider than the cobs to allow the kernels to be rubbed off, but not crushed. The corn cobs and cob dust would all be elevated (same as wheat) to the top of the elevator where there was a similar machine to the one in the seed cleaning building. All the mixture would run onto the machine, and the cobs would run off the top screen. The corn would fall through the holes in the second screen. This operation would make huge piles of cobs during the season.

The next important part of the mill operation was grinding. There were two round stone wheels encased in a metal container. Both of the wheels were about thirty inches in diameter and had six to eight angular grooves in them. One of the wheels was stationary and the other would turn. The turning wheel could be adjusted so the space between would allow the grain to be crushed to the desired coarseness. The grooves would allow the crushed grain to be expelled. Corn could be cracked or could be crushed for corn meal. All of these operations could be changed by removing belts from the pulleys on the main shaft and putting belts onto the required operation.

Some grain, if it contained too much moisture, would have a tendency to heat and could spoil or cause internal combustion and start a fire. There were no grain dryers in those days. In order to cool the grain, a spout was attached to the bin and the grain ran into the pit in the floor. The grain was then drawn by the bucket belt to the top of the elevator and directed into a new bin. All of this movement and the stirring was a more or less primitive method, but it was the only way and it worked.

In order to go from the first floor to the top floor of the elevator, there was a platform that was four foot square with a seven foot crossbar. A one inch diameter rope attached to the platform reached the top of the building and went over a two foot grooved pulley on a shaft. At the other end of the rope was a weight that was equivalent to the weight of the platform plus a person of average weight. This rope and weight were encased in a wood tube that expanded from the top to the bottom of the building. When the platform was on the lower floor the weight was at the top of the wooden shaft. Releasing the brake on the platform would lower the weight and pull it and the occupant upward. There was an attached rope from top to bottom that would allow the rider to assist the weight when the balance was not exact. If you were too light in weight there was a group of weights to place on the platform to equalize the counter weight and, perfectly balanced, it was a free ride. The elevator was the tallest building in town, by far, so when you went to the top and looked out the south window on a fall day after the trees had shed their leaves you could see most of the town.

The storage building of the elevator was used for storing lumber that was shipped in by box cars. Lumber was in big demand locally during these years. In the eighteen nineties there had been a flourishing sawmill north of this building where the workers stored their lumber, but it went out of business about 1906. *(To be continued.)*

Patriotic Cooperation and Recognition

On the evening of November 11th, 2010, the Greensburg-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce chose a patriotic theme for its annual meeting. Recalling the military display at the Historical Society over the last several months, Chamber representatives contacted the Museum staff for the loan of appropriate items. Museum volunteers arranged a most impressive display of uniforms, flags, veterans' service record books, and other paraphernalia. The response of those in attendance was exceptionally positive, and they expressed a greater awareness of what the Museum offers. It is hoped this recognition will lead to other opportunities for Decatur County organizations to work together for a result that is greater than its parts.



Document Cataloging

Museum volunteers are currently involved in cataloging the numerous original documents in the Museum's possession. Each document is described by the individuals involved, the circumstances which engendered the document, and the date(s) noted. When the project is completed, the data will be entered into our computer so researchers will be able to find primary sources - the references which are highly desirable.

Membership Form

Circle type of membership at left.

Membership rates are as follows:

Student	\$ 10.00 per year
Individual	\$ 15.00 per year
Family	\$ 25.00 per year
Patron	\$ 50.00 per year
Historian	\$100.00 per year
Lifetime	\$500.00 (one-time payment)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Mail to: Historical Society, P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240 - Attn: Dues.

Check your address label to see if you have paid. Memberships make great gifts. We are looking for new members. Consider giving a membership as a Christmas gift this year. We also have Courthouse puzzles, many past years' Christmas bulbs, maps and throws for gift giving. Call or stop by any Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday.

."The Two-Pound Cannon Ball"

The following article appeared in the *Greensburg Daily News* on September 14th, 1932. The purpose of the "cannon ball" for practice is perhaps plausible, but one would like to see the cannon that propelled the shot. Perhaps hearing of the existence of such an instrument of destruction deterred John Hunt Morgan from attacking Greensburg.

A two-pound cannon ball was found on the banks of Gas Creek near the stone quarry, just south of the city limits Tuesday and was brought to the News office today by Greenberry Roszell, 85, who is old enough to remember when a cannon belonged to the city and was often used back in the 60's in firing at a large sycamore tree which was used as a target. This ball is believed to have been one that was used In practicing on the tree which stood on the bank of the Creek. It may be seen in the News window.

The Fifth Season of "Fifth Sunday Musicals"

The Historical Society of Decatur is joining with the Greensburg Decatur County Public Library in presenting the fifth season of the Fifth Sunday Musicals at the Greensburg First Presbyterian Church.

The programs will be held on the fifth Sunday of various months in 2011. Classical music programs will be presented for the public's enjoyment.

Starting off the series will the Reen Family on January 30, 2011. This is a talented family of musicians and vocalists. On July 31, 2011 the featured talent will be Emily Ann Thompson with a Celtic fiddle program. The series finale will be on October 30, 2011 with the Junior High Band with the Elite Editions Show Choir.

If you would like to be a sponsor of these events please fill out the form below.

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Make check payable to : Decatur County Historical Society	
Mail to attention: "Fifth Sunday", P.O. Box 163, Greensburg, IN 47240	
Name_____	
Address_____	Phone_____

Museum Musings

by D. E. Springmier

This fall has been one of recognizing museum volunteers, sharing the museum with young ghosts and goblins and with other groups of all ages and walks of life.

September concluded with the Annual Volunteers' Luncheon, which was prepared by Polly Matlock and Susan Wilson, Society members, and volunteers. The luncheon was again held at the nearby Presbyterian Church. Centering the tables were hat-clad pumpkins, carrying out this years' theme, "Hats off to our Volunteers."

Those who share their time on a regular basis are the reason the museum is and continues to be open on a regular schedule four days a week and by appointment for private tours.

October, normally a quiet month before the anticipated preparation for the Holidays, was one of unusual yet delightfully spirited activities as life-size skeletons headed the dining room table whose chairs were enveloped by cobwebs, streaming from the chandelier. Amadeus Wolfgang Mozart's skeleton was poised to play the Four Square Grand while across the hall Riley poems were read to a circle of children by a friendly witch, Sally Robbins.

On the second floor, Red Riding Hood skirted the four poster as the Wolf with his menacing teeth peeked out from under the covers. Fortunes were told by a gentle witch in the textile room as a cakewalk was taking place in the gallery all to booming eerie organ music.

The lawn sported Jack the Ripper, John Dillinger and other characters' tombstones, guiding the way for the children attending the Society's first Annual Children's Halloween Party Saturday afternoon, October 23rd. The well-received party, planned by the Creepy Crawler Committee, members of the HSDC Board, chaired by Elizabeth Bailey, welcomed 130 children with their parents and grandparents. Many having their first museum experience, took part in the spirited afternoon.

That same evening an adult party and silent auction was held at the neighboring Saler building and in the museum's gallery. The committee appreciated the many donations that had resulted in a successful Halloween first for the Society and museum.

North Decatur Fifth Grade Students and a Cub Scout Troop were the last groups to visit the held-over Military Exhibit before the Halloween décor greeted Lone Tree DAR, honoring Good Citizen winners from the three local high schools at their October meeting.

For the past few weeks, the museum has shown the Victorian rooms as they would have been in that era. Now they are awaiting a Holiday dressing as the Christmas Committee carries out the 2010 theme, "Sweet Memories of Christmas," for the upcoming annual Christmas Open House, December 12, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Santa's letters may be mailed on the porch in the bright red L.S. Ayres mailbox while Santa and his elf will be greeting children in the north parlor. Ladies of the Society will have the dining room table laden with seasonal pastries while visitors will be entertained by Willadene Wood, pianist, Carolyn Cleland, harpist, and a return visit by young musicians from Melody Mart.

While 395 guests crossed the museum's threshold in October, the month of November will be busy with preparations for December's Christmas events.

See you during the holidays.

Diana

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DECATUR COUNTY MUSEUM Coming Attractions

December 3rd to 31st, 2010

Sweet Memories of Christmas

Sunday, December 12th

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Santa's

Elf will greet children of all ages

Children bring your letters to Santa

For the L.S. Ayers Toyland Mailbox

Train Display will delight all ages.

Enjoy holiday music and refreshments

Bring your cameras and have your picture taken in our vintage sleigh.

Free and open to the public



Upcoming Events for Next Year

Museum and office closed Jan 1st to Jan 31st.

January 30, 2011 Fifth Sunday- First Presbyterian Church - 1:00 p.m. - The Reen Family

This is a talented family of musicians and vocalists. This event is free and open to the public.

February 3, 2011 Annual Business Meeting

April, 2011 - All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League Exhibit

The Center of History in South Bend is the national archives for the All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League. We will have a wonderful display of original artifacts such as uniforms, gloves, hats, scorecards, photos, etc. More information to come.

April 16, 2011 Annual Dinner and Program

May 17 - 18, 2011 - Last Supper Quilt Exhibit - First Christian Church Family Life Center

This religious art and craft exhibit will feature "The Supper" quilt inspired by DaVinci's *The Last Supper* and pieced together by Don Locke, DDS. It has been exhibited in more than 30 states and 5 countries.

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William H. Robbins

Museum Director

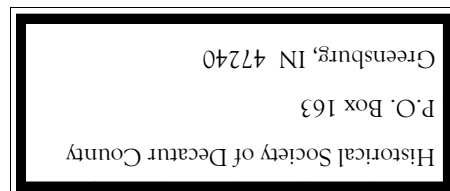
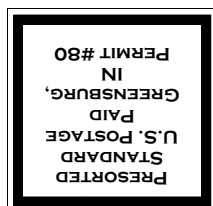
Diana Springmier

Historical Society of Decatur County Museum

Museum Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 to 2:00
Saturday 10:00 to 2:00 and Sunday 1:00 to 4:00 - April
thru December
Museum phone/fax: 663-2764
Email: dechissoc@etczone.net
After hours call 663-2997 or 663-5141

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Museum est. 1984**